Construction of highways in backward areas

1124. SHRI VIJAY J. DARDA:
. SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA:

Will the Minister of SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to speed up construction of highways in backward regions of the country by increasing the viability gap funding from 40% to 60% in respect of the projects which are part of the third phase of the National Highways Development Programme; and

(b) if so, the backward regions of the country which are likely to be benefited by the above decision with details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS (SHRI K.H. MUN!APPA): (a) and (b) The matter is under consideration of the Government and it will be premature to give the details.

Surfacing of roads

1125. SHRIMATI HEMA MALINI: Will the Minister of SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are considering surfacing of roads by concrete instead of Bitumen;

(b) whether Government are aware that concrete roads last longer, save fuel, with stand extremes of weather and are pollution free;

(c) if so, whether there is any plan to concretise 6,500 km. of National Highways by using unutilised 20 per cent production capacity of cement of the country;

(d) whether Government are also aware that fuel saving would amount to Rs. 14,500 crores a year if entire National Highways are concretised; and

(e) the road length of National Highways State-wise, giving details of 4 lane and 6 lane roads passing through these States?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS (SHRI K.H. MUNIAPPA): (a) Generally roads are constructed with flexible pavement having bituminous